

Editorial: Get Out the Vote 2020: Election & Democracy in Children's Literature

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Are you registered to vote? Will you vote early, absentee, mail-in, or in person on election day? With high political drama and a series of unprecedented issues surrounding the election process (slowed postal service! Pandemic! Fewer polling sites! Potentially disputed results!) guides to navigating getting your ballot in and counted are everywhere and varied state-by-state. Here's a guide for good measure:

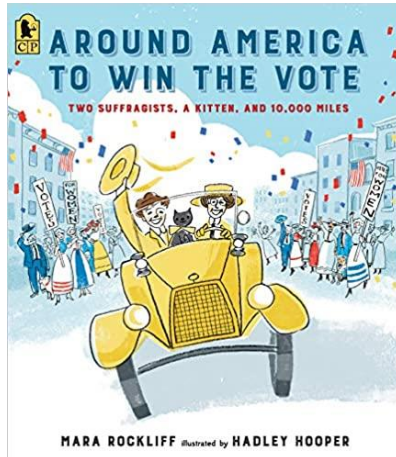
projects.fivethirtyeight.com/how-to-vote-2020

Like many people, I've voted since I was 18. I've also taken my children to the polls since they were born. Once they were toddlers, I could whisper the choices and push buttons while they watched, and poll workers never failed to reward them with an "I Voted" sticker at the end. Now that they are in elementary school, they have their own clear opinions about political candidates and fairness. They know not everybody used to be allowed to vote, and that still not everybody has equal representation in the government. They know their grandma and grandpa usually cancel each other's votes out, they know many of the candidates' names, and they'll see me work the polls for the first time in my life for the 2020 elections. They are little citizens every day in their town and the public school they attend.

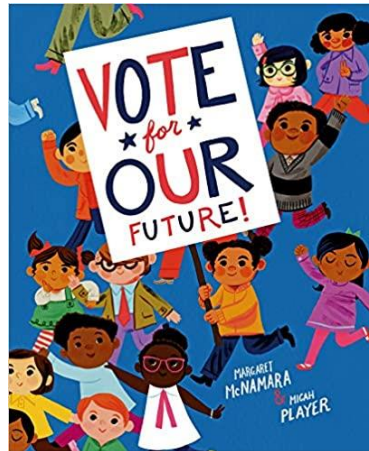
What we model for children as participants in a democracy matters very much. We all have experiences that have shaped our own democratic participation and voting habits; noticing and sharing yours with children and through books makes an impact. My own grandmother worked in the county clerk's office and my grandfather retired from the post office. I never knew their political affiliations—but I did know that they participated in government systems and democracy. I will never forget that. Your story of citizenry is unforgettable to the children in your life, too.

In this issue of *First Opinions*, *Second Reactions*, reviewers share a set of books alongside their own experiences reading about, talking about, and living as informed citizens in the US with families and children. We hope these books are informative catalysts to involving kids in direct participation in democracy. Democracy comes naturally to kids, and talking about

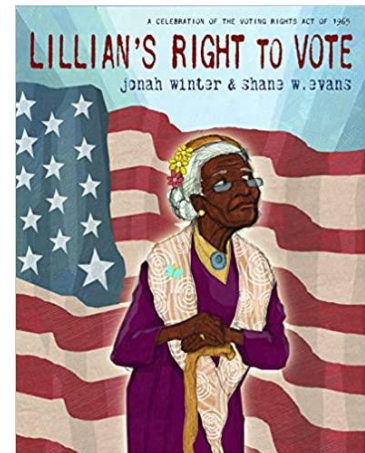
fair treatment and having your voice heard seems hardwired into them. The books in this issue open up conversations on citizenry, history of voting rights, the democratic process, and civil discourse—lessons we all need this election cycle. G.O.T.V.- Get Out the Vote- with these beautiful books:



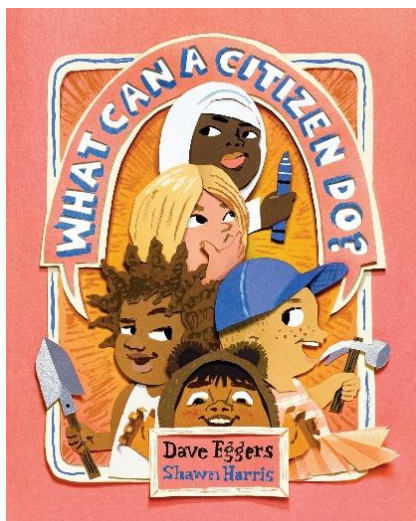
The story of two suffragists on a trek across America to spread the word: Votes for Women



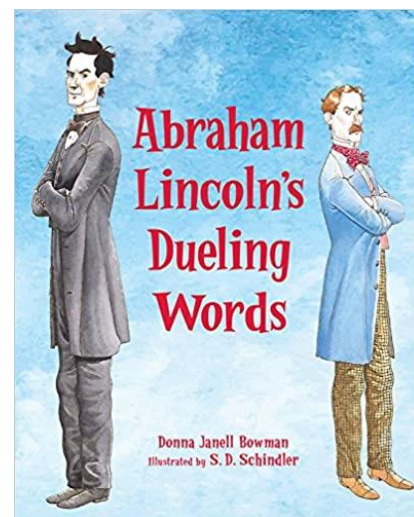
A charming and powerful picture book about voting and elections



A celebration of the Voting Rights Act of 1965



A book about what citizenship—good citizenship—means



In 1942 Abraham Lincoln did a rascally thing and was challenged to a duel. Ultimately, what he referred to as the meanest thing he had ever done, taught Lincoln

to be a better man.